

BOOK REVIEW

A key to Florida trees*

Florida is, indeed, the Land of Flowers. The visiting botanist from the north is likely to be overwhelmed by the immense number of species new to him. There are over three thousand species of plants in the state. Of these there are more than four hundred species of trees, more than in all the remainder of the United States. One hundred and seven species and subspecies of ferns and their allies are found within the border of the state.

Fortunately in only a few sections are there great concentrations of species. The total number is spread over five hundred miles in latitude and about one hundred miles in longitude except in the extreme northern part. In great areas, such as the "Piney Woods," pure Everglades and Prairie sections, only comparatively few species are found. In the far south, however, one will be kept very busy identifying the great variety of tropical and subtropical plants concentrated in the relatively small areas of the so-called Hammocks.

Added to the great number of native plants is a wealth of exotic ones from all quarters of the tropics which have been planted in the gardens of extensive estates, public parks, along highways and about small private homes.

"The Manual of the Southeastern Flora" by Small covers all the native flowering plants for the technical botanists and Mary Francis Baker's "Florida Wild Flowers" will enable the non-technical plant lover to identify the more striking plants at the time of the blooming.

Unfortunately, until recently, there has been no way of identifying the exotic trees and shrubs or the native ones when not in bloom. Miss Barrett's book of seventy-nine pages is designed to fill this lack. On the first few pages definitions of the small numbers of technical terms used are given. Nearly a page is devoted to the naming of places where concentration of exotics may be seen. Another page gives a short bibliography. The keys are based on leaf size, shape, margin, venation, and whether simple or compound.

Sometimes twig, and other characters are mentioned.

* A Leaf Key to Florida Broad-Leaved Trees, Native & Exotic, Except Palms. By Mary Franklin Barrett. Published by the author, 57 Union Street, Montclair, N.J., pp. 79, 1937. \$1.50.

Forty-seven line drawings illustrate terms. These drawings are of plants described in the key and thus serve a double purpose. There is a short "general" key which leads to many special keys. Over 600 species of trees are worked out in these keys.

In using the book it is very easy to go astray as one must be sure he understands just what each term means. The use of the sizes of leaves or leaflets is rather dangerous as these vary so greatly. Leaves from various parts of a tree or shrub are necessary in many cases.

There are some exotics omitted and the book is bound to be out of date as soon as published, since new plants are being introduced every day. However, it is a step in the right direction. Use will bring out its good and its bad points.

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